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**City Council Work Session Minutes  
Police Facility**

**Monday, January 14, 2019  
5:30 p.m., Community Auditorium**

***Minutes are unofficial until approved by Council.  
Council approved minutes as presented January 28, 2019.***

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Peter Truax called the Work Session to order at 5:35 p.m.

**ROLL CALL: COUNCIL PRESENT:** Thomas Johnston, Council President; Timothy Rippe; Ronald Thompson; Adolph “Val” Valfre (arrived at 6:35 p.m.); Malynda Wenzl; and Mayor Peter Truax. **COUNCIL ABSENT:** Elena Uhing, excused.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jesse VanderZanden, City Manager; Paul Downey, Administrative Services Director; Elizabeth Stover, Program Coordinator; J. F. Schutz, Police Chief; Kevin Ellingsburg, Police Captain (in the audience); Michael Hall, Police Captain (in the audience); Gregory Robertson, Public Works Director (in the audience); Colleen Winters, Library Director (in the audience); and Anna Ruggles, City Recorder.

**2. WORK SESSION: POLICE FACILITY**

Downey, Police Chief Schutz and VanderZanden facilitated the above-noted work session, noting the purpose of the work session was to provide information on the polling results, concept design used for cost estimate, facility costs, debt service costs, and the timeline if a bond request is submitted to voters in May 2019 or November 2019. Downey presented a PowerPoint presentation overview on the timeline if a bond request is submitted to voters in May and November, noting the Council must approve the Ballot Measure by February 25<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting in order to meet the County Election’s March 21<sup>st</sup> filing deadline. If a bond request is submitted to voters in November 2019, the Council must approve the Ballot Measure by August 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting in order to meet the County Election’s September 5<sup>th</sup> filing deadline. Downey presented the Cost Estimator’s Estimate and slides showing exterior and interior concepts that was the basis for the cost estimate (based on 25,481 sq. foot building and site cost estimate), noting estimated total construction is \$16,641,741 (includes 12 percent design contingency) and total estimated costs is \$18,659,532 (includes two percent bond issuance costs). In addition, Downey presented overviews pertaining to debt service assumptions; debt service costs; costs to single-family residence taxpayer; compare costs to polling questions and re-use of current facility. Downey introduced Martha DeLong, Campbell DeLong Resources (CDRI), consultant, who presented a PowerPoint presentation overview on the results of the 2019 Police Facility Bond Voter Survey conducted November 27 through December 11, 2018 (300 polled who typically vote on every election, 50/50 male/female), along with her firm’s conclusions and recommendations.

The voters polled were asked if they would approve a 20-year, \$17.5 million bond to fund a police facility that would help ensure the City is able to meet the community's needs for the next 40 years. A "yes" vote would result in a property tax rate of \$0.79 per thousand of assessed, not market, property value for the first year of the bond. For property assessed at \$250,000, about average for residential property in the city, the cost would be about \$197 per year. DeLong reported projection indicates a police facility bond would likely not pass at this time, noting initial support for the police facility bond is well under 50 percent, 43 percent of respondents said they would support the bond but further questioning revealed that only about one-quarter (27 percent) are "very confident" they would support the police facility bond in May; 3 in 10 are fence sitters who are not firmly committed. After hearing factual statements, "yes" voters were significantly more likely to be "very confident" of vote. In conclusion of the above-noted presentation, DeLong concluded that passage of a bond to fund a new facility will be difficult to persuade voters before the May 2019 election, noting it is similar to last spring's focus group participants, voters surveyed display a lack of understanding of what happens at a police facility and why Forest Grove needs a new facility. DeLong noted success will be possible only if there is a substantial effort to educate voters particularly "fence sitters" but also "no" voters.

#### **Council Discussion:**

Mayor Truax opened the floor and roundtable discussion ensued pertaining to the 2019 Police Facility Bond Voter Survey and timeline if a bond request is submitted to voters in May 2019 and November 2019. Downey, VanderZanden and consultant addressed various concerns and scenarios posed by Council pertaining to timeline, polling questions and statistics, DeLong referenced various statistics, noting frequent voters are typically homeowners. In response to inquiries pertaining to costs to taxpayers, Mayor Truax gave an example of the cost scenario, noting it would cost taxpayers about \$1.10 per day total for police protection (bond and levy costs combined). DeLong cautioned that many undecided and opposed respondents indicated they do not believe a new police station is needed and are not convinced of its importance, noting the voters simply do not understand what happens in a police station. DeLong referenced two statements that stood out as useful to all voter segments: 1) The current police facility's evidence processing area is undersized and evidence is often stored in outdoor portable containers that are not climate controlled, a situation that can potentially jeopardize criminal cases; and 2) The new police facility would be designed to provide a safe, private place for interviewing victims, including children and victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. DeLong noted the fence sitters especially also want to know: 1) The new facility would be designed to ensure separation of adult and juvenile offenders, something that is currently difficult to do and 2) The current facility has limited accessibility for those with physical disabilities. A new facility would be designed to be accessible to all community members. DeLong advised communications efforts that include examples illustrating these four messages will be more effective in helping voters understand the need for a new police facility. DeLong referenced cost, cited as \$197 per year for the average home, is of particular importance to "no" voters, noting given the

size of the no vote, some “no” voters will likely need to change their minds for the bond to pass. Mayor Truax posed the question if it would be best to have the measure on the May 2020 and/or November 2020 ballots as the election results could be similar to 2018 election, to which DeLong advised measures held during presidential elections help drive turnout among low-frequency voters. In response to concerns that the measure could be in conflict with other upcoming money measures, i.e., Metro and Washington County, Council asked staff to provide a list of other proposed measures and costs. In response to inquiries pertaining to if the basis of the cost estimate could be reduced, Downey advised he would ascertain if costs could be reduced. In response to inquiries pertaining to submitting the measure and then reducing the rate if it is rejected, DeLong cautioned against this strategy of responding to a rejection by coming back with a lesser amount for a cheaper facility, noting the survey specifically asked about a property tax increase of \$0.79 per thousand of assessed property value. Mayor Truax also cautioned against this strategy, noting once cuts are made, it never stops. In conclusion of the above-noted discussion, Downey, Police Chief Schutz and VanderZanden advised staff has a work session scheduled for January 28, 2019, at which time, staff will discuss next steps, ballot approval timelines, review the concept design and information on the public education process, including draft informational material developed.

Council took no formal action nor made any formal decisions during the work session.

**3. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Truax adjourned the work session at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Anna D. Ruggles, CMC, City Recorder